



Report: U.S. interstate system faces congestion, decay

BY LIZ CAREY | JUNE 26, 2026 | FEATURED



A new report from TRIP, a national transportation research nonprofit has found that the U.S. interstate system still delivers at 70 years old, but faces severe congestion and decay.

The Congressionally requested report, “Saving Lives, Time and Money: Maintaining the Enduring Value of America’s Greatest Infrastructure Achievement, the Interstate Highway System at 70,” was designed to look at the Interstate system’s use, condition and benefits. The report found that the nation’s transportation network is congested, carries significant levels of travel – particularly by

large trucks and lacks adequate funding to make needed repairs and improvements.

According to the report, the transportation network will need to be rebuilt and expanded in order to meet the country’s growing transportation needs. In 2019, the report said the Interstate System has a persistent and growing backlog of physical and operational deficiencies as a result of age, heavy-use and deferred reinvestment. The report concluded that the investment into the system should be increased two and a half times, from \$23 billion in 2018 to \$57 billion annually over the next 20 years.

“As we all know, a safe, interconnected, well-maintained, and efficiently operated national transportation network is essential to our nation’s security and economy. The Interstate Highway System plays a pivotal role within that network, moving people and freight alike to their destinations safely,” Jim Tymon, executive director of the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials, said. “As we look to a federal surface transportation reauthorization, this TRIP report allows us to see just how important it is to invest in our Interstate system and give states the tools they need to ensure safe and efficient transport today and well into the future.”

The report also said the Interstate system saves Americans time and money. Travel on the system is more than twice as safe as on all other roadways with a fatality rate of 0.57 per 100 million vehicle miles of travel on Interstates (as of 2024), compared to 1.39 for non-Interstate routes.

“The Interstate Highway System remains one of our nation’s most important transportation assets, helping to connect people, goods and services and support safe mobility across the country,” Jill Ingrassia, VP of Public Affairs at AAA, Inc, said. “As TRIP’s report highlights, continued and increased investment is needed to maintain and modernize the system so it can meet current demands and serve future generations. AAA urges Congress and the administration to work together to ensure the Interstate System remains safe, reliable and efficient for all travelers.”

Additionally, an analysis from the Texas Transportation Institute at Texas A&M University found that the Interstate system improves access and reduces congestion – reducing delays by 1.3 billion hours and reducing gasoline consumption by 369 million gallons.